



NATIONAL VETERANS GOLDEN AGE GAMES

Competitor Profile (National)

Marie Halcomb – Games Get Competitive Juices Flowing!

Marie Halcomb entered military service in 1943 – when women were first inducted into the Marine Corps. “They didn’t know where to put us, but we ended up going to boot camp at Camp Lejeune,” Halcomb recalls. After training, she became a propeller specialist and served as an Aviation Machinist Mate, assigned for a time as an aircraft mechanic for a dive bomber. Halcomb is proud of her military service and for helping pioneer the title, “Woman Marine.” Honorably discharged in 1945, she married four years later and raised her family in southeast Michigan, also working in a variety of administrative positions over the next 26 years.

After her husband’s death, Halcomb retired in Largo, Florida in 1977 and later joined the Bay Pines VA Medical Center’s Golden Age Team. She competed in her first National Veterans Golden Age Games in 1995, and has returned from the event each year with a large selection of gold medals. “I have a wall full of them,” she says with satisfaction. She’s not finished winning them either, hoping to bring home a few more at the 2007 Games in Houston this August. Now 84, the feisty former sergeant retains her spirit of adventure. “This will be my 14th year competing,” Halcomb says proudly. “But it will be my first time competing from a wheelchair.”

After returning to the workforce ten years ago, Holcomb got a job at a Florida security company. In 2005, she fell while working in the office. As a result of the injuries she received, she lost the use of her legs and now uses a wheelchair. That hasn’t deterred her interest in competing, however. “Getting ready to compete in the Games helps keep my physically fit,” Holcomb says. “The competition is great for my physical recovery.”

At the 2007 National Veterans Golden Age Games, Holcomb plans to compete in the horseshoes, air rifles, shot-put and discus events, this time from her wheelchair. “I’m working on throwing to build up my strength and get ready for the competition,” she says. “This event is about more than the medals, though. It’s also about meeting new friends and renewing acquaintances made at past Games. I have met some very good friends at the Golden Age Games, and I’ve looked forward to seeing them again. After having to miss last year while I was in the hospital, I’ve been anxious to participate again.”

Halcomb says, “Being involved in these Games keep me active and help keep me young. I would tell other veterans that if they’re competitive, the juice is still in there and they can renew it just by competing in the Golden Age Games.” Marie Halcomb calls the Golden Age Games “a big family reunion. Everyone is so friendly, so talkative, that by the time I get home, I have 50 new friends. I love these Games, and God willing, I’ll still be back year after year.” Even if she is now competing from a wheelchair. *Welcome back, Marie!*

